

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

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APPROVED BY EA/K - MR O'DONOHUE

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ACDA/IR - JMCNEIL

ERDA - JGARRETT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, KS

SUBJECT: ROK NPT RATIFICATION

REF: (A) STATE 90560; (B) STATE 92662; (C) SEOUL 2710

1. IN SMALL CEREMONY IN DEPARTMENT APRIL 23, USG ACCEPTED
ROKG INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION DATED APRIL 15, 1975.

2. ROK EMBASSY CHARGE KU CHUNG-HOE MADE INTRODUCTORY
REMARKS AND READ APRIL 23 MOFA STATEMENT ISSUED IN SEOUL
ON OCCASION OF NPT RATIFICATION.

ZURHELLEN READ PREPARED REMARKS CONTAINED REF B.

3.FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR USE OF
DEPT SPOKESMAN AT APRIL 23 PRESS BRIEFING.

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QUOTE

QUESTION: HAS THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA COMPLETED RATIFICATION OF THE NPT?

ANSWER: AS ONE OF THE THREE NPT DEPOSITORY STATES, THE U.S. ACCEPTED, ON APRIL 23, THE SIGNED INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION OF THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT. OUR ACCEPTANCE

COMPLETES THE FORMAL RATIFICATION PROCESS.

QUESTION: CAN YOU COMMENT ON RECENT PRESS REPORTS ABOUT KOREAN NUCLEAR INTENTIONS?

ANSWER: AS YOU KNOW, BY RATIFYING THE NPT A NATION UNDERTAKES NOT TO MANUFACTURE OR OTHERWISE ACQUIRE NUCLEAR WEAPONS OR OTHER NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES AND ALSO TO ACCEPT INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS ON ALL OF ITS NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES.

QUESTION: CAN YOU COMMENT ON CONGRESSMAN ASPIN'S CLAIM THAT KOREA COULD MANUFACTURE ATOMIC BOMBS FROM THE WASTE PRODUCTS OF REACTORS THE US IS SELLING TO KOREA?

ANSWER: THE ATOMIC ENERGY COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND KOREA PROVIDES THAT ANY REPROCESSING OF SPENT FUELS FROM REACTORS SHOULD TAKE PLACE QUOTE IN FACILITIES THAT ARE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH PARTIES UPON A JOINT DETERMINATION THAT SAFEGUARDS MAY BE EFFECTIVELY APPLIED. MNQUOTE. AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, THERE IS NO FACILITY IN KOREA AT THE PRESENT TIME THAT COULD REPROCESS THE SPENT FUEL OF THOSE REACTORS INTO WEAPONS- GRADE PLUTONIUM.

BACKGROUND: A RECENT NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE STATED THAT THE ROK IS ONE OF SEVERAL COUNTRIES WHICH INTEND TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS BUT PRESENTLY LACK THE CAPABILITY TO DO SO. CONGRESSMAN LEE ASPIN HAS CLAIMED THAT THE SPENT FUEL FROM ENRICHED URANIUM SOLD BY THE U.S. TO THE ROK FOR USE IN ITS FIRST NUCLEAR REACTOR CAN BE USED TO PRODUCE ATOMIC BOMBS.

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END Q;OTE

4. THERE WERE NO QUESTIONS ON KOREA AT APRIL 23 NOON BRIEFING.

5. FYI: WE HAVE POUCHED COPY OF ARTICLE ON CONGRESSMAN ASPIN STATEMENT. ASPIN USED FIGURE OF 1,500 POUNDS OF PLUTONIUM NOT 150,000 AS REPORTED REF C. ASPIN WAS RE-

FERRING TO CONTRACTS BETWEEN ERDA AND KOREAN ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY FOR 48,000 KILOGRAMS OF LOW ENRICHED
URANIUM FOR USE IN KORI I. THERE IS NO QUOTE TYPICAL
CLAUSE, UNQUOTE AS ASPIN REPORTEDLY SUGGESTS, REQUIRING
REPROCESSING OF SPENT FUEL. FACILITIES TO REPROCESS
KORI I SPENT FUEL DO NOT EXIST IN EITHER U.S. OR KOREA
AND ANY REPROCESSING IS SUBJECT TO US APPROVAL UNDER
1972 ROK-US AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION IN THE CIVIL USES
OF ATOMIC ENERGY. END FYI. KISSINGER

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